Amendments to the Claims

1-106. (Canceled)

107. (Previously Presented) A method comprising:

providing a plurality of sockets, wherein

      each socket has an associated connection and an associated security token;

receiving a first connection and a first security token;

comparing the first security token with the associated security tokens;

in response to said comparing, if none of the associated security tokens match the

      first security token, creating a socket associated with the first connection

      and the first security token.

108. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 107, wherein

a security token is one of a password, a network address, and a verification string.

109. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 107 further comprising:

in response to said comparing, if the first security token and a security token

      associated with one of the plurality of sockets match, coupling the first

      connection to the connection associated with the socket.

110. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 109 further comprising:

in response to said comparing, if none of the associated security tokens match the

      first security token,

            upon a determination that the first connection is not to be associated with a

            socket, disconnecting the first connection.

111. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 109, wherein the coupling the first connection to the connection associated with the socket comprises:

relaying a data stream between the first connection and the connection associated with the socket.

112. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 109, wherein the coupling the first connection to the connection associated with the socket comprises:

creating a single connection comprising the first connection and the connection associated with the socket.

113. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 109 further comprising:

decoupling the first connection and the connection associated with the socket.

114. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 113, wherein

the decoupling occurs upon one of failure and disconnect of one of the first connection and the connection associated with the socket.

115. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 109, wherein

the first connection is transmitted through a first firewall program.

116. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 115, wherein

the first connection is created by a protocol daemon.

117. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 116, wherein

a second connection connects the protocol daemon to a first program, and

the protocol daemon couples the first connection to the second connection.

118. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 117, wherein

the protocol daemon relays a data stream between the first connection and the second connection.

119. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 118, wherein the first program provides the first security token.

120. (Previously Presented) A method comprising:

creating a first connection to a first program;

receiving a first security token from the first program;

creating a second connection to a relay program;

providing the first security token to the relay program; and

upon successful creation of the second connection, coupling the first connection to the second connection.

121. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 120, wherein the second connection is transmitted through a firewall program.

122. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 120 further comprising:

relaying a data stream between the first connection and the second connection.

123. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 120, wherein the first security token is one of a password, a network address, and a verification string.

124. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 120 further comprising:

terminating the first connection and the second connection.

125. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 120, wherein the relay program compares the first security token with one or more security tokens associated with one or more corresponding connections;

in response to said comparing, if the first security token and a security token associated with a corresponding connection match,

coupling the second connection to the connection associated with the matching security token; and

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in response to said comparing, if none of the associated security tokens match the

first security token,

creating a socket associated with the second connection and the first

security token.

126. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 125, wherein

the connection associated with the matching security token is initiated by a second

program.

127. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 125, wherein

the relay program relays data between the second connection and the connection

associated with the matching security token.

128. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 121, wherein

a protocol daemon program does the creating the first connection, the creating the

second connection, the receiving the first security token from the first

program, the providing the first security token to the relay program, and

the coupling the first connection to the second connection.

129. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 128, wherein

the protocol daemon program and the firewall program are resident on a single

computer.

130. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 128, wherein

the protocol daemon program and the first program are resident on a single

computer.

131. (Previously Presented) An apparatus comprising:

means for providing a plurality of sockets, wherein

each socket has an associated connection and an associated security token;

means for receiving a first connection and a first security token;

means for comparing the first security token with the associated security tokens;

in response to said comparing, if none of the associated security tokens match the first security token, means for creating a socket associated with the first connection and the first security token.

132. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 131, wherein a security token is one of a password, a network address, and a verification string.

133. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 131 further comprising:
in response to said comparing, if the first security token and a security token associated with one of the plurality of sockets match, means for coupling the first connection to the connection associated with the socket.

134. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 133 further comprising:
in response to said comparing, if none of the associated security tokens match the first security token,
upon a determination that the first connection is not to be associated with a socket, means for disconnecting the first connection.

135. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 133, wherein the means for coupling the first connection to the connection associated with the socket comprises:
means for relaying a data stream between the first connection and the connection associated with the socket.

136. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 133, wherein the means for coupling the first connection to the connection associated with the socket comprises:
means for creating a single connection comprising the first connection and the connection associated with the socket.

137. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 133 further comprising:
means for decoupling the first connection and the connection associated with the socket.

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138. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 137, wherein the decoupling occurs upon one of failure and disconnect of one of the first connection and the connection associated with the socket.

139. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 133, wherein the first connection is transmitted through a first firewall program.

140. (Previously Presented) An apparatus comprising:

means for creating a first connection to a first program;

means for receiving a first security token from the first program;

means for creating a second connection to a relay program;

means for providing the first security token to the relay program; and

means for coupling the first connection to the second connection upon successful creation of the second connection.

141. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 140 further comprising means for transmitting the second connection through a firewall program.

142. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 140 further comprising:

means for relaying a data stream between the first connection and the second connection.

143. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 140, wherein the first security token is one of a password, a network address, and a verification string.

144. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 140 further comprising:

means for terminating the first connection and the second connection.

145. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 140, wherein the relay program further comprises:

    means for comparing the first security token with one or more security tokens associated with one or more corresponding connections;

    means for coupling the second connection to a connection associated with a security token, if the first security token and the security token associated with the corresponding connection match; and

    means for creating a socket associated with the second connection and the first security token, if none of the security tokens associated with the one or more corresponding connections match the first security token.

146. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 145, wherein the connection associated with the matching security token is initiated by a second program.

147. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 145, wherein the relay program further comprises:

    means for relaying data between the second connection and the connection associated with the matching security token.

148-164. (Canceled)

165. (New) A computer program product encoded in computer readable media, the computer program product comprising:

    a first set of instructions, executable by a processor and configured to cause the processor to provide a plurality of sockets, wherein each socket has an associated connection and an associated security token;

    a second set of instructions, executable by the processor and configured to cause the processor to receive a first connection and a first security token;

    a third set of instructions, executable by the processor and configured to cause the processor to compare the first security token with the associated security tokens;

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a fourth set of instructions, executable by the processor and configured to cause

the processor to create a socket associated with the first connection and the

first security token, in response to said comparing, if none of the

associated security tokens match the first security token.

166. (New) The computer program product of Claim 165, wherein a security
token is one of a password, a network address, and a verification string.

167. (New) The computer program product of Claim 165 further comprising:

a fifth set of instructions, executable by the processor, responsive to said

comparing, and configured to cause the processor to couple the first

connection to the connection associated with the socket if the first security

token and a security token associated with one of the plurality of sockets

match.

168. (New) The computer program product of Claim 167 further comprising:

a sixth set of instructions, executable by the processor, responsive to said

comparing, and configured to cause the processor to disconnect the first

connection,

if none of the associated security tokens match the first security token, and

upon a determination that the first connection is not to be associated with a

socket.

169. (New) The computer program product of Claim 167 further comprising:

a seventh set of instructions, executable by the processor and configured to cause

the processor to relay a data stream between the first connection and the

connection associated with the socket.

170. (New) The computer program product of Claim 167 further comprising:

an eighth set of instructions, executable by the processor and configured to cause

the processor to create a single connection comprising the first connection

and the connection associated with the socket.

171. (New) The computer program product of Claim 167 further comprising:

a ninth set of instructions, executable by the processor and configured to cause the processor to decouple the first connection and the connection associated with the socket.

172. (New) The computer program product of Claim 171 further comprising:

a tenth set of instructions, executable by the processor and configured to cause the processor to decouple the first connection and the connection associated with the socket upon one of failure and disconnect of one of the first connection and the connection associated with the socket.

173. (New) The computer program product of Claim 167, wherein the first connection is transmitted through a first firewall program.

174. (New) A computer program product encoded in computer readable media, the computer program product comprising:

a first set of instructions, executable by a first processor and configured to cause the first processor to create a first connection to a first program;

a second set of instructions, executable by the first processor and configured to cause the first processor to receive a first security token from the first program;

a third set of instructions, executable by the first processor and configured to cause the first processor to create a second connection to a relay program;

a fourth set of instructions, executable by the first processor and configured to cause the first processor to provide the first security token to the relay program; and

a fifth set of instructions, executable by the first processor and configured to cause the first processor to couple the first connection to the second connection upon successful creation of the second connection.

175. (New) The computer program product of Claim 174, wherein the second connection is transmitted through a firewall program.

176. (New) The computer program product of Claim 174 further comprising:

a sixth set of instructions, executable by the first processor and configured to

cause the first processor to relay a data stream between the first connection

and the second connection.

177. (New) The computer program product of Claim 174, wherein the first

security token is one of a password, a network address, and a verification string.

178. (New) The computer program product of Claim 174 further comprising:

a seventh set of instructions, executable by the first processor and configured to

cause the first processor to terminate the first connection and the second

connection.

179. (New) The computer program product of Claim 174, wherein the relay

program comprises:

an eighth set of instructions, executable by a second processor and configured to

cause the second processor to compare the first security token with one or

more security tokens associated with one or more corresponding

connections;

a ninth set of instructions, executable by the second processor, responsive to said

comparing, and configured to cause the second processor to couple the

second connection to the connection associated with the matching security

token if the first security token and a security token associated with a

corresponding connection match; and

a tenth set of instructions, executable by the second processor, responsive to said

comparing, and configured to cause the second processor to create a

socket associated with the second connection and the first security token if

none of the associated security tokens match the first security token.

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180. (New) The computer program product of Claim 179, wherein the connection associated with the matching security token is initiated by a second program.

181. (New) The computer program product of Claim 179, wherein the relay program further comprises:

an eleventh set of instructions, executable by the second processor, configured to cause the second processor to relay data between the second connection and the connection associated with the matching security token.